



Attitudes of University Students towards People with Disabilities in the Social Context: A Preliminary Study

Azzahrah Anuar^{1*}

Nor Mazlina Ghazali²

^{1,2}Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, 94300 Kota Samarahan, Sarawak, Malaysia

ABSTRACT

The article highlights on the previous literature on the attitudes of college or university students towards people with disabilities in the social context globally. The article also includes factors that influence the willingness of college or university students to build relationship with people with disabilities in the social context (such as friendship, dating, and marriage) and perceptions of students that add to the existing challenges encountered by people with disabilities. When perception is being measured in a more specific dimension, such as, in the social distance context, it provides a practical means to understand people's awareness towards disability.

Keywords: university student attitude; people with disabilities; social context

INTRODUCTION

The motivation for studying attitudes towards people with disabilities stems from the identification of negative attitudes and their apparent connection to bias and discrimination. Negative attitudes are thought to be at least partially responsible for discrimination encountered by people with disabilities in many social facets of life (Rubin & Roessler, 2008). Such attitudes create barriers to developing a positive social engagement with people with disabilities.

The attitudes held towards people with disabilities vary. A large body of research has documented societal attitudes towards people with disabilities in general. However, little research has been done to explore attitudes towards people with disabilities in a more specific context, such as, engaging in personal relationships or building friendships. Many studies related to this area have taken place in the Western culture, particularly, in the United States. Little research has been published and is

ARTICLE INFO

E-mail address:
aazzahrah@unimas.my (Azzahrah Anuar)
*Corresponding author

ISSN: 2462-1153

© Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS)